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PRESS RELEASE

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S. JONATHAN BASS TO PRESENT BOOK TALK AT THE ARCHIVES ON FEBRUARY 28 AT 12:00
HE CALLS ME BY LIGHTNING: THE LIFE OF CALIPH WASHINGTON AND THE FORGOTTEN SAGA OF JIM CROW,
SOUTHERN JUSTICE, AND THE DEATH PENALTY

Montgomery, AL (02/15/2018) – On **Wednesday, February 28 at 12:00**, author S. Jonathan Bass will present a book talk on his publication ***He Calls Me by Lightning: The Life of Caliph Washington and the forgotten Saga of Jim Crow, Southern Justice, and the Death Penalty*** at the Alabama Department of Archives and History (ADAH) in Montgomery. Admission is **FREE**.

On a muggy Alabama night in mid July 1957, policeman James “Cowboy” Clark lay dying on a red dirt road near Birmingham, while Caliph Washington stood nearby and held a smoking revolver—a gun that Washington never fired but one he now possessed as he fled into the night. The shooting of the white officer looked like a homicide, and all evidence pointed to the black suspect as the triggerman. Within weeks, the suspect found himself arrested, tried, and sentenced by an all-white jury to “ride the lightning” in the arms of the state’s electric chair. In his presentation, Bass will recount this compelling story of racial injustice

S. Jonathan Bass is a writer and historian from Alabama who specializes in culture, race, religion, and law during the civil rights era. He is a professor of history and chair of the department of history at Samford University. Bass is the author of the Pulitzer Prize-nominated *Blessed Are the Peacemakers: Martin Luther King, Jr., Eight White Religious Leaders and the ‘Letter from Birmingham Jail.’* He is a frequent speaker on various topics related to Alabama history and was recognized by the National Urban League with an Interracial Friendship Award. He holds a Ph.D. in history from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and lives in Birmingham with his wife and children.

For more information about the book talk, call (334) 353-4689.

The Alabama Department of Archives and History is the state’s government records repository, special collections library and research facility, and is home to the Museum of Alabama, the state history museum. It is located in downtown Montgomery, directly across the street from the State Capitol. The Archives and Museum are open Monday through Saturday, 8:30 to 4:30. The EBSCO Research Room is open Tuesday through Friday and the second Saturday of the month from 8:30 to 4:30. To learn more, visit www.archives.alabama.gov or call (334) 242-4364.

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